

## Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time



Faith is often misunderstood, even among Christians. It is not simply wishful thinking or a denial of reality, but an attitude of trust in the presence of God. For those of us affected by a loved one's addiction, faith means releasing the illusion that we can manage or control outcomes and instead learning to trust God with what we cannot carry. Faith keeps us open to what God can and will do if we seek Him with an honest and willing heart.

This attitude of faith is nurtured when we apply the spiritual tools of recovery to our lives. We admit that our attempts to control, rescue, or fix our loved one were limited and often harmful. Our own resources and plans failed us, leaving us powerless and frustrated. We must transition out of self-sufficiency and begin relying on a Power greater than ourselves, one who offers peace in place of chaos and serenity in place of fear.

Faith invites us to live each day with genuine trust—not just intellectually believing that God exists, but actually turning our lives over to Him. As Bishop Robert Barron explains, “Real faith goes way beyond a vague intellectual ascent. It looks like trust and confidence. It looks like really turning your life over to God.” Jesus describes the power of even a small seed of faith in this Sunday’s Gospel (Luke 17:5–6):

*The apostles said to the Lord, “Increase our faith.”  
The Lord replied, “If you have faith the size of a mustard seed,  
you would say to this mulberry tree,  
‘Be uprooted and planted in the sea,’ and it would obey you.”*

This passage comes right after Jesus commands His followers to forgive repeatedly (Luke 17:3–4). Forgiveness—whether for ourselves or for our loved ones—is impossible without faith. It requires us to trust God’s grace more than our own feelings of anger, fear, or disappointment.

Jesus shows us that extraordinary things happen when we surrender fully to Him. The more we lean on God, the more strength He gives us to forgive, to set boundaries, and to live in serenity. Faith is not a passive hope—it is an active trust, exercised daily as we let go and let God.

When we attempt to manage life on our own terms, we often end up deepening our anguish. Recovery reminds us that our program of action is not self-help but rooted in a spirit of *God, help!* Real faith frees us from fear and fills us with courage to live one day at a time, knowing we are not alone.

Faith is also the foundation of forgiveness and love. Just as the Steps remind us to seek amends and extend mercy, the Lord's Prayer teaches us to forgive as we are forgiven. We do not claim to be perfect, but we aim to make spiritual progress through trust in God.

The Spirit of Jesus is powerful, loving, and wise, reflecting God's light and guiding us into peace. This Spirit encourages us to bear witness by how we live, as this Sunday's second reading reminds us (2 Timothy 1:7-8):

*For God did not give us a spirit of cowardice but rather of power and love and self-control. So do not be ashamed of your testimony to our Lord, nor of me, a prisoner for his sake; but bear your share of hardship for the gospel with the strength that comes from God.*

## Reflection Questions

- How has your understanding of faith changed as you've grown in your own recovery journey?
- Where are you being asked to exercise "mustard seed faith" in your relationships today?
- How does practicing forgiveness—toward yourself and others—help strengthen your trust in God?

### **CIR Retreats Happening this Fall**

*Strengthen your recovery and deepen your faith with fellow community members at a CIR retreat*

- Weekend retreat in Menlo Park, CA October 17-19
- 1-day retreat in Jensen Beach, FL on November 8
- Find inspiration, guidance, and encouragement through testimonies, workshops, CIR meetings, sacraments, reflection time, and recovery fellowship
- Find more information and register today at [catholicinrecovery.com/events](http://catholicinrecovery.com/events)

## Sunday Mass Readings this Week

**First Reading:** Habakkuk 1:2-3; 2:2-4

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 95:1-2, 6-7, 8-9

**Second Reading:** 2 Timothy 1:6-8, 13-14

**Gospel:** Luke 17:5-10